

Logica Genevensis continued.

O R

THE SECOND PART OF THE
F I F T H C H E C K
T O
ANTINOMIANISM:

C O N T A I N I N G

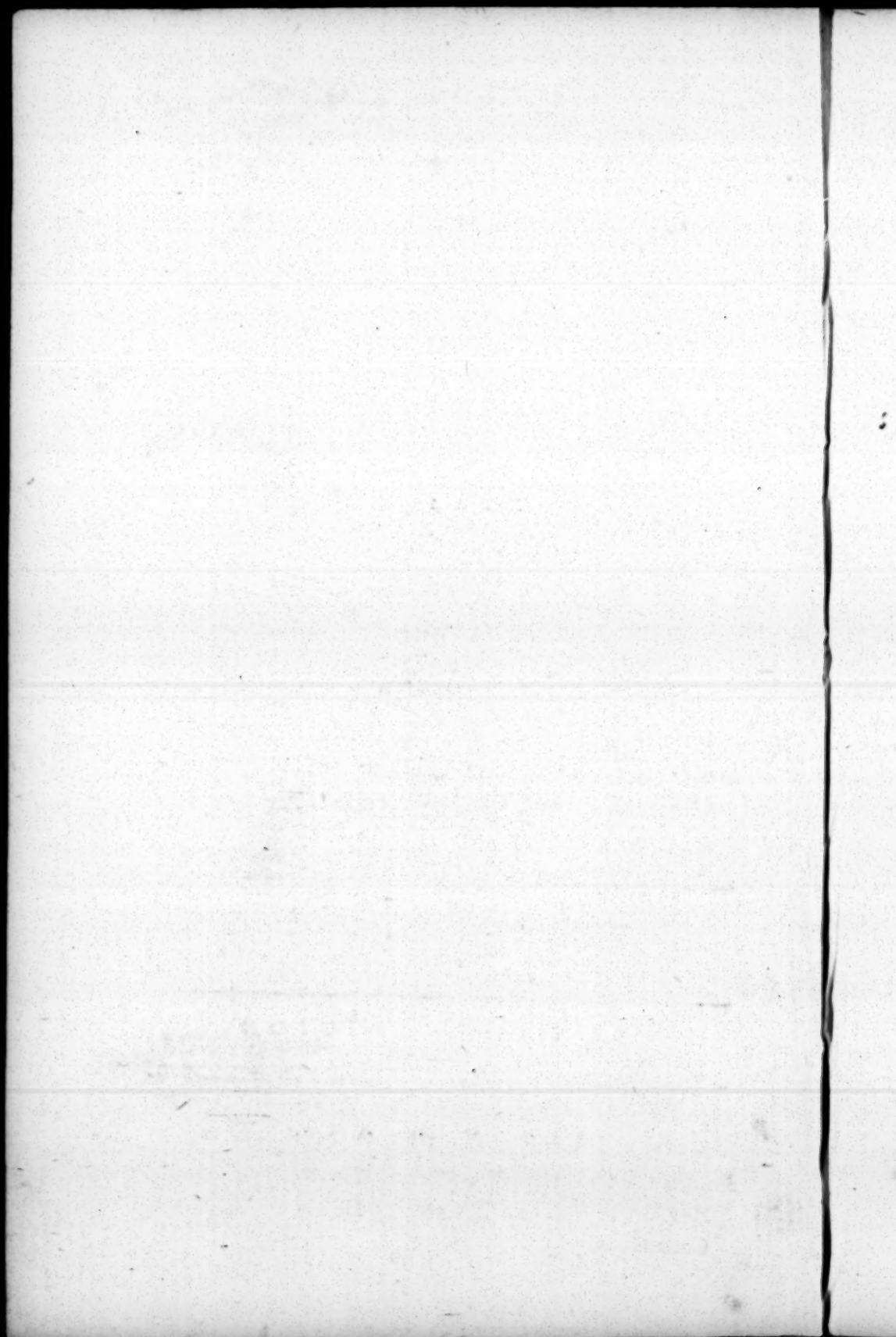
A Defence of "*Jack o'lanthorn*," and "*the Paperhite*," i. e. Sincere Obedience;—of the "*Cobweb*," i. e. The evangelical law of liberty;—and of the "*valiant Sergeant I. F.*" i. e. The conditionality of Perseverance, attacked by the Rev. Mr. Berridge, M. A. Vicar of Everton, and late Fellow of Clare-hall, Cambridge, in his book called *The Christian world unmasked*.

—*Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.*
HOR.

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed and sold at the New-Chapel, City-Road; and at the
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A DEFENCE.

A

D E F E N C E, &c.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

HAVING animadverted upon Mr. H's *Finishing Stroke*, I proceed to ward off the *first* blow, which the Rev. Mr. *Berridge* has given to practical religion. But, before I mention his mistakes, I must do justice to his person. It is by no means my design to represent him as a divine, who either leads a loose life, or *intends* to hurt the Redeemer's interest. His conduct as a christian is exemplary; his labours as a Minister are great; and I am persuaded that the wrong touches, which he gives to the ark of godliness, are not only undesigned, but *intended* to do God service.

There are so many things commendable in the pious Vicar of *Everton*, and so much truth in his *Christian world unmasked*, that I find it an hardship to expose the unguarded parts of that performance. But the cause of this hardship is the ground of my apology. Mr. B. is a good, an excellent man, therefore the antinomian errors, which go abroad

into the world with his letters of recommendation, speak in his evangelical strain, and are armed with the poignancy of his wit, cannot be too soon pointed out, and too carefully guarded against. I flatter myself, that this consideration will procure me his pardon, for taking the liberty of dispatching his "*valiant sergent*," with some doses of rational and scriptural antidote for those, who have drunk into the pleasing mistakes of his book, and want his piety to hinder them from carrying speculative into practical antinomianism.

FIRST SECTION.

Mr. Berridge advances the capital error of the Antinomians, when he says, that "Faith must UTTERLY exclude ALL justification by works:" and when he represents "the passports of obedience" as a paper-kite.

ONE of my opponents has justly observed, that "the principal cause of controversy among us" is the doctrine of our justification by the *works* of faith in the day of judgment. At this rampart of practical godliness Mr. B. levels such propositions as these in his *Christian world unmasked*, 2d. Edition, p. 170, 171. FINAL justification by faith is the CAPITAL doctrine of the gospel—Faith being the term of salvation, &c. must UTTERLY exclude ALL justification by works—And p. 26, we read of an ABSOLUTE impossibility of being justified IN ANY MANNER by our works.

If these positions are true, say, reader, if St. James, St. Paul, and Jesus Christ did not advance great untruths when they said: *By WORKS a man is JUSTIFIED and not by faith only*, James-ii. 24. *For not the hearers of the law [of Christ] are just before*

before God, but the DOERS shall be JUSTIFIED, &c. in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. Rom. ii. 13. 16. For [adds our Lord, when speaking of the day of judgment] by thy WORDS thou shalt be JUSTIFIED, &c. Matt. xii. 37. Christian reader, say, who is mistaken, Christ and his Apostles, or the late Fellow of Clare-hall?

§ Mr. B. goes farther still. Without ceremony he shuts the gates of heaven against every man, who seeks to be justified by works, according to our Lord's and St. James's doctrine. For when he has assured us p. 171, that *faith must UTTERLY exclude ALL justification by works* he immediately adds "And the man who seeks to be justified by his passport of obedience, will find no passage through the city gates." Might not our author have unmasked calvinism a little more and told the christian world, that the man who minds what Christ says shall be turned into hell?

See the boldness of Solifidianism!* In our Lord's days believers were to keep their mouths as with a bridle, and to abstain from every idle word, lest in the day of judgment they should not be justified. In St. John's time they were to do Christ's commandments, that they might enter through the gates into the city, Rev. xxii. 14, but in our days a gospel-minister assures us, p. 171, that the believer, who according to our Lord's doctrine seeks to be "justified by his passport of obedience, will find NO passage through the city gates. He may talk of the tree of life, and soar up with his PAPER-KITE to the gates of paradise, but will find no entrance." —I grant it, if an Antinomian Pope has St. Peter's key;

* *Solifidianism* is the doctrine of the Solifidians; and the *Solifidians* are men, who because sinners are justified [*sola fide*] by SOLE FAITH in the day of conversion, infer as Mr. B. that "believing is the total term of all salvation," and conclude as Mr. H. that the doctrine of final justification by the works of faith in the great day, is "full of rottenness and deadly poison." It is a softer word for *Antinomianism*.

key ; but so long as Christ has the key of David : so long as he opens, and no Solifidian shuts ; the dutiful servant, instead of being sent flying to hell after the “paper-kite” of obedience, will, through his Lord’s merits, be honourably admitted into heaven *by the passport* of good works, which he has about him. For, though the remembrance of his sins and the sight of his Saviour, will make him ashamed to produce it ; yet he had rather die ten thousand deaths, than be found without it. The celestial porter, after having kindly opened it for him, will read it before an innumerable company of angels, and say, *Enter into the joy of thy Lord, for I was hungry and thou gavest me meat ;* &c. Matt. xxv. 35, &c.

§ If the Vicar of *Everton* throws in an Antinomian caveat against this “passport of obedience,”† and ridicules it still as a “paper-kite,” Isaiah and St. Paul will soon silence him. *Open ye the gates,* says the evangelical prophet, *that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth of the gospel-precepts, as well as of the gospel-doctrines, may enter in :* for adds the evangelical Apostle, *Circumcision [including all professions of faith] is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. Yea, though I have ALL FAITH and no charity, I am nothing,* Is. xxvi. 2. 1 Cor. vii. 19. xiii. 2.

If I am at the city gates, when Mr. *B.* will exclaim against the “passport of obedience,” I think I shall venture to check his imprudence by the following questions. Can there be a medium between *not having a passport of obedience and having one of disobedience* ? Must a man, to the honour of free grace, take a passport of refractoriness along with him ? Must he bring a certificate of adultery and murder to
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† I speak only of the *obedience of faith*. It is only for that obedience, and for the *works of faith* that St. James pleads in his epistle, Mr. *W.* in the Minutes, and I in the Checks. All other obedience is *insincere*, all other works pharisaical.

be welcome into the new Jerusalem? I am persuaded that with the utmost abhorrence Mr. B. answers *No!* But his great Diana, speaks louder than he, and says before all the world: "There is no need that he should have a testimonium of adultery and murder, but he may if he pleases; nay, if he is so inclined, he may get a diploma of treachery and incest: it will never invalidate his title to glory; for if David and the incestuous Corinthian had *saving* faith, *inamissible* eternal life, and *finished* salvation," when they committed their crimes; and if Faith or BELIEVING [as Mr. Berridge affirms, p. 168.] is *the TOTAL term of ALL salvation,*" why might not every christian, if he is so minded, murder his neighbour, worship idols, and gratify even incestuous lusts as well as primitive backsliders without risking his *finished* salvation? Upon this antinomian axiom advanced by Mr. B. "*Believing is the TOTAL term of ALL salvation,*" I lay my engine, a grain of reason, and ask every *unprejudiced* person, who is able to conclude that two and two make four, whether we may not, without any magical power, heave morality out of the world, or Calvinism out of the church?

If Mr. Berridge pleads, that when he says, p. 168, "*Believing is the TOTAL term of ALL salvation,*" he means a faith "including and producing all obedience:" I reply, Then he gives up solifidianism, he means the very faith which I contend for in the Checks; and pressing him with his own definition of faith; I ask, how can a "*faith including all obedience,*" include *murder*, as in the case of David; *idolatry*, as in the case of Solomon; *lying, cursing and denying Christ*, as in the case of Peter; and even incest as in the case of the apostate Corinthian? Are murder, idolatry, cursing, and incest, "*all obedience?*"--If Mr. B. replies No: Then David, Solomon, &c. lost the *justifying faith* of St. Paul, when they lost the *justifying works* of St. James; and so Mr. B. gives up the point together with calvinism.-If he says Yes: he
not

not only gives up St. James's justification, but quite unmasks antinomianism: and the rational world "who come and peep," may see that his doctrine of grace is not a *chaste*, but a great *Diana*, who pays as little regard to decency, as she does to scripture.

If this is a sophism, I humbly intreat the learned Fellow of Clare-hall to convince the world of it, by shewing where the fallacy lies. He can do it if it can be done, "*having consumed a deal of candle at a noted hall at Cambridge, in lighting up a good understanding,*" even after he was declared *master of the art of logic*. But if the dilemma is forcible, and grinds calvinism as between an upper and a nether mill-stone, I hope that he will no longer oppose the dictates of reason merely to pour contempt upon our Lord's doctrine of a believer's justification by the works of faith; and to sport himself with *obedience*, rendered as ridiculous as Sampson was, when the Philistines treated him as a blind mill-horse.

SECOND SECTION.

Containing an account of the doctrine of the Solifidians with respect to St. James's gospel-law, or law of liberty, which Mr. B. indirectly calls a cobweb; and with respect to sincere obedience, which he directly calls 'a jack o'lanthorn:'

WE have already seen how Mr. B. gives the *passport of obedience* to the winds as a boyish trumpery. To render the "*paper-kite*" more contemptible, p. 145, he ties to it instead of a tail, "*a spruce new set of duties half a yard long, called legally-evangelical,*
and

and evangelically-legal, unknown to Christ and his apostles, but discovered lately by some ingenious gentlemen." Just as if I, who have ventured upon those expressions, to indicate the harmony that subsists between the promises of the gospel and the duties of the law of liberty, and Mr. Wesley who has let those compounded words pass in the second check, were the first men who have taught, that believers are not without law to God, but under a law to Christ. 1 Cor. ix. 21. Just as if nobody had said before us *Do we make void the law through faith, or through the gospel? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law*, Rom. iii. 31. That is, by preaching a faith that worketh by love, we establish the moral law: for love is the fulfilling of it, and he that loveth another has fulfilled the law, Rom. xiii. 8, 10.—Not indeed the ceremonial law of Moses, for ceremonies and love are not the same thing; nor yet the adamic law of innocence, for if the apostle had spoken of that law, he would have said, *He that has ALWAYS loved another with PERFECT love, has fulfilled the law*: therefore he evidently speaks of the evangelical law, preached thus by St. James to believers, *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the LAW OF LIBERTY*. Jam. ii. 12. A law which is so called, not because it gives us the least liberty to sin: but because, during the day of salvation, it indulges us with the precious liberty to repent of our former sins, and come to Christ for pardon, and for stronger supplies of sanctifying grace.

However, Mr. Berridge, as if the antinomians had already burned St. James's epistle, says, p. 144, after speaking of the law of innocence given to Adam before the fall, "*All other laws,*" [and consequently the law of liberty] "*are cobwebs of an human brain:*" What, Sir, do you think, that Moses was a spiritual spider, when he wove the ceremonial law? Can you possibly imagine that David's blessed man, whose delight is in THE LAW of the Lord, meditates day and night in a LAW, which bids him "*stand upon his own legs,*" and absolutely despair of mercy upon

upon "*a single trip?*" Would you on second thoughts say, that St. Paul and St. James weave "*cobwebs*" in the brains of mankind when they declare, that *the end of the COMMANDMENT* [or of Christ's law] is *charity from a pure heart, a good conscience and faith unfeigned*; when they speak of *FULFILLING the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*; or when they assure us, that *he who loveth another HATH FULFILLED IT*; and exhort us to *bear one another's burdens and so FULFIL THE LAW OF CHRIST*? See 1 Tim. i. 5. Jam. ii. 8. Gal. v. 13. and Gal. vi. 2.

§ I shall not borrow here the rash expression, which Mr. Berridge uses when he confounds original worthiness, and derived merit, and reflects upon Christ, who evidently attributes the latter to believers: I shall not say, that my new opponent's mistake "*is enough to make † a devil blush*:" but I may venture to affirm, that before he can prove, the *law of liberty* is a "*cobweb*," he must not only burn St. James's epistle, but sweep away

† How strangely may prejudice influence a good man! Mr. Berridge, p. 164, &c. raises a masked battery against the article of the Minutes, where Mr. Wesley hints, that *the word merit* might be used in a Scriptural sense to express what Dr. Owen, by an uncouth circumlocution, calls, *The rewardable condecency, that our whole obedience, through God's gracious appointment, has unto eternal life*—"Oh, Sir, [says M. B.] God must abominate the pride, the insolence of human pride, which could dream of *merit*: it is enough to make a devil blush."—There is great truth in these words, if Mr. B. speaks only of *proper merit*, or *merit of condignness*: but if he extends them to the evangelical *worthiness* so frequently mentioned by our Lord; if he applies them to *improper merit*, generally called *merit of congruity*, he indirectly charges Christ with teaching a doctrine so excessively diabolical, that the devil himself would be ashamed of it; and what is more surprising still, if I mistake not, he indirectly inforces the dreadful heresy himself by an ILLUSTRATION, which in some degree shows how God rewards us "*for*" our works, and "*according to*" our works.—"A tender-hearted gentleman [says he] employs two labourers out of charity, to weed a little spot of four square yards. Both are

away the epistles of St. Paul to the Romans and to the Galatians; together with the law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. While he considers whether the tree of Antinomianism will yield a besom strong enough for that purpose, I beg leave to dwell a moment upon another of his mistakes. It respects obedience and good works, against which Solifidians indirectly wage an eternal war. It runs through several pages, but centers in the following unguarded propositions.

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P. 35.

are old and much decrepit, but one is stronger than the other. The stronger weeds three yards, and receives three crowns: the weaker weeds one, and receives one crown. Now both the labourers are rewarded for their labour, and according to their labour, but not for the MERIT of their labour."—Granted, if *merit* is taken in the sense of *proper merit*, or *merit of condignness* and equivalence; but absolutely denied if it is taken in the sense of *improper worthiness*, or *merit of congruity*.—Let Thomas Aquinas, the most famous of all the Papist divines, bring his standard of *merit*, and measure Mr. B. and if the Vicar of Exerton [how loud soever he may exclaim against the word] is not found holding the DOCTRINE of *merit of congruity* as much as Mr. Baxter, let me for ever forfeit all pretensions to a grain of common sense. "The angelic Doctor" defines *merit* thus: "Dicitur aliquis mereri ex condigno, quando invenitur æqualitas inter præmium et meritum secundum æstimationem: ex congruo autem, tantum quando talis æqualitas non invenitur; sed solum secundum liberalitatem dantis munus tribuitur quod dantem decet."—That is, "A man is said to merit it with a *merit of condignness*" [i. e. to merit *properly*] when upon an average there appears an equality between the reward and the merit. But he is said to merit only with a *merit of congruity* [i. e. to merit *improperly*] when there is no such equality; and when a benefactor out of mere liberality makes a present, which becomes him to make."—Now, let candid men compare Mr. Berridge's ILLUSTRATION, with the definition that the most renowned Papist Doctor has given us of *merit*; and let them say if Mr. B. instead of splitting the hair, does not maintain, and ILLUSTRATE the doctrine of *merit of congruity*; and if one of the blushes which he supposes our Lord's doctrine of *worthiness* or *merit* would bring upon the face of some modest devil, does not become the author of the Christian world unmasked more than the author of the Minutes.

P. 35. l. 18. *Sincere obedience is no where mentioned in the gospel as a CONDITION of salvation*; and p. 36. l. 4. *Works have no share in the covenant of grace as a CONDITION of life*. I grant it, if by *salvation*, in the first proposition, and by *life* in the second, Mr. B. means INITIAL *salvation*, and life BEGUN in the world of grace. For undoubtedly the *free gift* is come upon all men to *justification*, or salvation from the damning guilt of original sin, and consequently to some interest in the divine favour previous to all obedience and works. Again and again have I observed, that as by one man's disobedience, many [*οἱ πολλοί*, the multitudes of men] were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, many [*οἱ πολλοί*, the multitudes of men] shall, to the end of the world, be made righteous, i. e. partakers of the above-mentioned justification, in consequence of Christ's atonement and the talent of free grace, and supernatural light, which enlightens every man that comes into the world. [Compare Rom. v. 18, 19, with John i. 4, 5, 9.] Far from opposing this initial LIFE of free grace, this SALVATION unconditionally begun, I assert its necessity against the Pelagians, and its reality against the Papists and Calvinists, who agree to maintain, that God has absolutely * reprobated a considerable part

* Some of my readers will wonder at my coupling the Calvinists and the Romanists, when I speak of those who hold absolute reprobation; but my observation is founded upon matter of fact. We are too well acquainted with the opinion of the Calvinists concerning the vessels of wrath. The sentiments of the Papists not being so public, may be brought to light by the following anecdote. Being some years ago at Ganges in the South of France, I went with Mr. Pomaret, the Protestant Minister of that town, to recommend to divine mercy the soul of a woman dying in child-bed. When we came out of the house, he said: Did you take notice of the person who was by the bed-side? He is a Man-midwife, and a strenuous Papist. You see by the consequences that this poor woman had a very hard labour. As it was doubtful whether the child would be born alive, he insisted upon baptizing it in the womb, *avec une seringue* according to custom. The Protestant women in the room exclaimed against his intention of tormenting a

part of mankind. But Mr. Berridge's propositions are Antinomianism unmasked, if he extends their meaning (as his scheme does)

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to

woman in that extremity, by so ridiculous and needless an operation. Needless! replied he, how can you call that needless, which will save a soul? Do you not know that if the child dies unbaptized, it will certainly be lost? The doctrine of the Romish Church is then *free* wrath, or *free* reprobation for the myriads of infants, who die without baptism all the world over.

§ I beg leave to confirm this anecdote by a *public* testimony. My opponents have frequently mentioned the agreement of my sentiments with those of the Popish champion *Bellarmino*. This gave me a desire of looking into his works. Accordingly I procured them last winter; and, to my great surprise, before I had read a page, I found him a peculiar admirer of the great Predestinarian *St. Augustine*, whom he perpetually quotes. Nay, he is so strenuous an assertor of Calvinistic election, that, to prove "*We can give no account of God's election on our part,*" among the reasons advanced by *Calvin, Coles, Zanchus, &c.* in support of unconditional election and reprobation, he proposes the following argument, "*Tertia ratio, &c. ducitur a parvulorum diversitate, quorum aliqui rapiuntur statim a baptismo, alii paulo ante baptismum, quorum priores ad gloriam prædestinatorum, posteriores ad poenam reproborum pertinere non est dubium: nec possunt hic ulla merita prævisa, ullusve bonus usus liberi arbitrii, aut gratiæ fingi.*" *Bell. Opera De gratia et libero arbitrio. Cap. V. Antverpiæ, 16, 1. p. 766.* That is "*The third reason is taken from the different lot of little children: some being snatched immediately after baptism, and others a little before baptism: the former of whom undoubtedly go to the glory of the elect; and the latter, to the punishment of the reprobates. Nor can any desert foreseen, or any good use of free-will or of grace be here pretended.*" This argument is truly worthy of the cause which it supports. The very essence of Calvinism is an irreconcilable opposition to the second gospel-axiom. And as *Bellarmino's* argument demolishes that axiom, (it being impossible that the damnation of reprobated infants should be *from themselves*) he necessarily builds up Calvinism, with all its gracious doctrines. I might here return my last opponent these words of his *Finishing Stroke*, p. 15. which he writes in capitals, "SO BELLARMINO"—"*See Sir, what company you are again found in:*"—But I do not admire such arguments. Were father Walsh and Cardinal Bellarmine in the right, it would be no more disgrace to Mr. Hill to stand between them both, than it is to me to believe with the Cardinal, that Christ has said, *In the day of judgment by thy words shalt thou be justified.* For, as a diamond does not become a pebble upon the finger of a Papist, so truth does not become a lie under his pen.

to *finished* salvation, and to a *life of glory*, unconditionally bestowed upon adulterous backsliders: for *sincere obedience*, or the *good works*, or *faith*, are a condition [or, to use Mr. B's word, "*a term*"] indispensably required of all, that stay long enough upon the stage of life, to act as moral agents. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away*, John xv. 2. *Be not deceived, neither fornicators, &c. shall inherit the kingdom of God.* 1 Cor. vi. 9. See Ezek. xviii. and xxxiii. *If the penitent thief had lived*, says our Church, and not regarded the works of faith, he should have lost his salvation again. As for the argument taken from these words, *he that believeth* [now, with the heart unto righteousness] *hath everlasting life*, [i. e. has a title to and a taste of a life of glory, and shall have the enjoyment of it, if he continues in the faith, rooted and grounded:] it is answered at large, 4th Check. p. 94, &c.

Page 38. Mr. B. unmasks Antinomianism in the following proposition, "*I have gathered up my ends respecting this matter; and I trust you see at length that sincere obedience is nothing but a jack-o'lanthorn, dancing here and there and every where: no man could ever catch him, but thousands have been lost by following him.*"

If I mistake not, Mr. Berridge here exceeds Mr. Hill. The author of P. O. only supposes, that works have nothing to do before the Judge of all the earth in the matter of our eternal salvation, and that all believers shall "*sing louder*" in heaven for all their crimes upon earth. But the Vicar of *Everton* represents *sincere obedience* [which is a collection of all the good works of upright Heathens, Jews, and Christians] as "*a jack-o'lanthorn; and thousands;*" says he "*have been lost by following him.*"—Here is a blow at the root!—What! thousands lost by following after *sincere obedience* to God's commands! Impossible!—Our pious author, I hope, means *insincere obedience*; but if he stands to what he wrote, he must not be surprized, if with the "*good folks cast in a gospel foundery,*"

"foundery, I ring a fire-bell," and warn the protestant world against so capital a mistake. That thousands have been lost by resting in faithless, superficial, hypocritical, *insincere* obedience, I grant: but thousands!—lost!—by following after *sincere* obedience, i. e. after the obedience we uprightly perform according to the light we have!—This is as impossible, as that the Holy Ghost should lie when he testifies, *In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him* according to one or another of the divine dispensations: he is accepted as a converted heathen, jew, or christian.

Had I the voice of a trumpet I would shout upon the walls of our Jerusalem; *Let no man deceive you*: no body was ever lost, but for NOT following after, or for starting from *sincere* obedience: christian faith itself being nothing but *sincere* obedience to this grand gospel precept, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. We have received apostleship*, says St. Paul, for OBEEDIENCE TO THE FAITH among all nations, Rom. i. 5. No adult children of Adam were ever eternally saved, but such as followed after *sincere* obedience, at least from the time of their last conversion, if they once drew back towards perdition. For Christ says the apostle, *is the author of ETERNAL salvation to them that obey him*; and he undoubtedly means that obey him *sincerely*: he will render eternal life to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, or by persevering in "*sincere* obedience," seek for glory. —Has the Lord as great delight in burnt-offering, says Samuel, as in OBEYING [and I dare say he meant *sincerely* obeying] the voice of the Lord?—Behold [whatever solidians may say] to OBEY is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams: for rebellion [or disobedience] is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as idolatry. Heb. v. 9. Rom. ii. 7. 1 Sam. xv. 22.

§ God, to shew the high value he puts upon *sincere* obedience, sent Jeremiah to the Rechabites with

this message; *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, BECAUSE ye have OBEYED the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts: therefore Jonadab the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.* His capital charge against Israel is that of disobedience. St. Peter, who observes that the believing Jews had purified their souls by OBEYING the truth, asks what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel? And St. Paul answers, that Christ will come in flaming fire taking vengeance of them—and that God will render tribulation and wrath to them that do not OBEY the truth, but OBEY unrighteousness; and even that famous passage, *He that believeth on the son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the son, shall not see life,* John iii. 36, is in the original a rampart against solifidianism: for in the last sentence of it, the word rendered *believeth not*, is not *οὐ πιστευων*, in opposition to the first clause: but *απειθων*, an expression, which, by signifying equally *he who DISOBEYETH* and *he who believeth not*, guards the doctrine of obedience as strongly as that of faith.

THIRD SECTION.

An answer to Mr. B's capital arguments against sincere obedience.

THE serious reader probably wonders at the pious vicar of Everton, and asks if he supports his assertions against sincere obedience by arguments? Yes he does, and some of them are so plausible, that the simple can hardly avoid being deceived by them: nay and some of the judicious too: for asking last summer, a sensible clergyman, what part of Mr. B's book he admired most, he

convinced

convinced me of the reasonableness of this publication by replying, "I think him most excellent upon *sincere obedience*." A glaring proof this, that the impossibility of deceiving the very elect is not *absolute*, and that our Lord did not give them an *impertinent* caution when he said, *Take heed that no man deceive you*. But let us hear Mr. B.

P. 24. "Perhaps you think that Christ came to shorten man's duty, and make it more feasible by shoving a commandment out of Moses's tables, as the papists have done; or by clipping and paring all the commandments, as the moralists do. Thus *sincere obedience*, instead of *perfect*, is now considered as the law of works. But if Jesus Christ came to shorten man's duty he came to give us a licence to sin. For duty cannot be shortened without breaking commandments. And thus Christ becomes a minister of sin with a witness, and must be ranked at the head of antinomian preachers."—To this specious argument I reply:

(1) After the fall, Christ was given in the promise to mankind as a *Mediator*; and help was laid upon him to make man's duty (as a redeemed sinner) feasible. To deny it, is to deny man's redemption. At that first promulgation of the gospel, what St. Paul calls the *law of faith*, and St. James, the *law of liberty*, took place. This gracious law has been in force under all the dispensations of the everlasting gospel ever since. And according to its tenor in the day of judgment we shall be justified or condemned, Mat. xii. 37.—

(2) To assert that *the law of liberty or the law of faith* requires of us paradisiacal innocence, and such a *perfection* of bodily and rational powers as Adam had before the fall, is to set Christ's mediation aside; and to suppose, that it leaves us just where it found us, that is under the old adamic covenant.—(3) *The law of liberty* neither "shoves out, pares, nor clips" any moral commandment; for it condemns a man for the adultery of the eye, as well as for gross fornication; and for the murder

of

this message; *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, BECAUSE ye have OBEYED the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts: therefore Jonadab the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.* His capital charge against Israel is that of disobedience. St. Peter, who observes that the believing Jews had purified their souls by OBEYING the truth, asks what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel? And St. Paul answers, that Christ will come in flaming fire taking vengeance of them—and that God will render tribulation and wrath to them that do not OBEY the truth, but OBEY unrighteousness; and even that famous passage, *He that believeth on the son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the son, shall not see life,* John iii. 36, is in the original a rampart against solifidianism: for in the last sentence of it, the word rendered *believeth not*, is not *οὐ πιστεύων*, in opposition to the first clause: but *ἀπειθων*, an expression, which, by signifying equally *he who DISOBEYETH* and *he who believeth not*, guards the doctrine of obedience as strongly as that of faith.

THIRD SECTION.

An answer to Mr. B's capital arguments against sincere obedience.

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of the tongue or heart, as well as for manual assassination; and it requires us to love God with all our heart and our neighbour as ourselves, according to the light of our dispensation and the talent of power we have received from above. He that keeps this whole law, and breaks it in one point [as Saul did in the matter of Agag, David in the matter of Uriah, Judas in the matter of Mammon, some Corinthians and Galatians in biting one another; and some of the christians to whom St. James wrote, in despising the poor and shewing a mean partiality to the rich]—he, I say, that knowingly and wilfully breaks this law in one point, is guilty of all; and he remains under the curse of it, till he has repented, and resumed the obedience of faith. Therefore, when our Lord substituted *the law of liberty* for the law of innocence, he neither “gave us a licence to sin,” nor “became a minister of sin with a witness,” as Mr. B. rashly affirms.—(4) The fourth *Mosaic* commandment allows *no manner of work*, but the last edition of the law of liberty allows all manner of works of necessity and mercy, to be done on the sabbath. Our Lord therefore dispenses with the uncommon rigour, with which the jews observed that sacred day: and if Mr. B. will call that indulgence “*clipping, paring*” or altering the 4th commandment, he is at liberty: but if we break a commandment in availing ourselves of our Lord’s gracious dispensation, why does Mr. B. allow his man-servant, his maid-servant, or his horse, to work on the saturday? Why does he not keep the *seventh* day holy “like the circumcized race?”—(5) *Innocent* man with *unimpaired* powers, could yield *perfect* obedience, to the law of innocence; therefore that law made no allowance, no provision for any deficiency in duty. Not so the law of liberty; for although it allows no wilful sin, yet it does not reject sprinkled, though as yet imperfect, obedience. Nor does it, as some divines would persuade the world, curse the bud because

because it is not yet the blossom, or the blossom because it is not yet the fruit, or the fruit, because it is not yet ripe: provided it tends to maturity, and harbours not *insincerity*, the worm that destroys evangelical obedience. It declares, that our works of faith are *accepted according to what we have, and not according to what we have not*. It graciously receives from an heathen; and from a babe in Christ, the obedience of a babe. And instead of sentencing to hell the man, whose pound has *only* gained *five pounds*, and in whom the seed of the word has *only* produced *thirty-fold*; it kindly allows him half the reward of him, whose pound has gained ten pounds, or in whom the seed has brought forth *sixty-fold*. But it shews no mercy to the unprofitable servant, who buries his talent: and it threatens with sorer punishment the wicked servant, who *turns the grace of God into lasciviousness*.—(6) “Thus sincere obedience is now considered as the law of works.” Not so: but it is considered, even by *judicious Calvinists*, as that obedience, which *the law of liberty* accepts of, by which it is *fulfilled*, and thro’ which believers *shall be justified* in the great day. I might fill a volume with quotations from their writings; but three or four will sufficiently prove my assertion.—Joseph Alleine, that zealous and successful preacher, says in his *Sure guide to heaven, or Alarm to the unconverted*. Lond. 1705. p. 153, 154. “The terms of mercy [*he should have said* The terms of **ETERNAL salvation**] are brought as low as possible to you. God has stooped as low to sinners, as with honour he can. He will not be thought a fautor of sin, nor stain the glory of his holiness; and whither could he come lower than he hath, unless he should do this? He has abated the impossible terms of the first covenant. Acts xvi. 31. Prov. xxviii. 13. He does not impose any thing unreasonable or impossible, as a condition of life, [*Alleine should have said, as a condition of* **ETERNAL life IN GLORY**, for God

in

in Christ most freely gives us an *initial life of grace*, before he puts us upon performing any terms in order to an *eternal life of glory*.] “Two things were necessary to be done by you according to the first covenant, &c. And for future *obedience*, here he is content to yield to your weakness, and remit the rigor. He does not stand upon [*legal*] perfection &c. but is content to accept of *sincerity*. Gen. xvii. 1.—Matthew Mead in his treatise on *The good of early obedience*, London, 1683, p. 402, says, “It must be an upright and SINCERE OBEDIENCE. *Walk before me and be thou perfect*. So that sincerity and uprightness is new-covenant perfection. The perfection of grace in heaven is glory; but the perfection of grace on earth is *sincerity*.”—Mr. Henry perfectly agrees with M. Mead, when he thus comments upon Gen. vi. 9, “*Noah was a just man and perfect*; he was perfect, not with a sinless perfection [*according to the first covenant*] but a perfection of sincerity. And it is well for us, that by virtue of the covenant of grace, upon the score of Christ’s righteousness, *sincerity* is accepted as our gospel perfection!”—Hence it is that Dr. Owen says, a believer *as such*, shall be tried, judged, and justified, “by his own personal SINCERE OBEDIENCE.” Of justification, p. 111.—By comparing these fair quotations with Mr B’s argument, my reader, without having the sagacity of “an old fox,” will see that antinomianism has lost all decency in our days, and is not ashamed to call “jack-o’-lanthorn,” &c. what the sober calvinists of the last century called “gospel perfection.”

§ Lastly to insinuate, as Mr. B. does, that “Christ becomes a minister of sin with a witness, and must be ranked at the head of antinomian preachers,” because he has substituted the law of liberty for the old Adamic covenant, is something so ungrateful in a believer, so astonishing in a gospel-minister, that—But I spare the pious vicar of Everton, and
rise

rise against *thee*, O Crispianity! *Thou* hast seduced that man of God, and upon *thee* I charge his dreadful mistake. However, he will permit me to conclude this answer to his shrewd argument by the following query: "If *Christ becomes a minister of sin, and must be ranked at the head of the antinomian preachers,*" for placing us under the law of liberty, which curses a fallen believer that breaks it in one point [though it should be only by secretly harbouring malice or lust in his heart] what must we say of the divines, who give us to understand, that believers are not under the law preached by St. James, but under directions or "rules of life," which they may break unto adultery and murder, without ceasing to be God's pleasant children, and men after his own heart? —Must these popular men *be ranked at the head,* or at the tail of the *antinomian preachers?*

P. 24. Mr. B. advances another argument: "If sincere obedience means any thing, it must signify either doing what you can, or doing what you *will.*" —I apprehend it means neither the one nor the other, but doing with uprightness *what we know God requires of us*, according to the dispensation of grace which we are under; meekly lamenting our deficiencies, and aspiring at doing all better and better every day. "So we are" [not] "*got upon the old swampy ground again,*" but stand upon the rock of ages, and there defend the law of liberty against mistaken solidians.

P. 27. Mr B. instead of shewing, that our obedience is *insincere* if we live in sin, and despise Christ's salvation, goes on mowing down all sincere obedience without distinction. —"*I perceive,* says he, *you are not yet disposed to renounce sincere obedience:*" and to engage us to it, he advances another argument, which if it were sound would demolish not only "*sincere obedience,*" but *true repentance, faith unfeigned, and all christianity.* To answer it therefore, I only need to produce it;
substituting

substituting the words *true repentance, or faith unfeigned*, for "*sincere obedience*," which Mr B. ridicules: thus:

"You might have reason to complain, if God had made *sincere obedience* [I say, *true repentance, or faith, unfeigned*] a condition of salvation: much talk of it there is, like the good man in the moon, yet none could ever ken it. I dare defy the scribes to tell me truly what *sincere* [*repentance*] is; whether it means leaving half my sins, or one fiftieth, or one hundredth part; shedding half a score tears or fifty, or one hundred. I dare defy all the lawyers in the world to tell me whether *faith unfeigned* means believing half the bible, or three quarters, or one quarter, or one fiftieth, or one hundredth part: or whether it means believing with * half a grain of the faith which removes a mountain-load of guilt," or one fiftieth, or one hundredth part of a grain? Or whether it implies believing with all our hearts, or with "half, or three quarters, or one quarter," &c. Where must we draw the line! It surely needs a magic wand to draw it. See p. 27. l. 13. &c.

Mr. B. turns this flaming argument against *sincere obedience* like the cherub's sword, every way. Take two more instances of his skill; still giving me leave to level at *faith unfeigned*, "the total term of all salvation," what he says, against *sincere obedience*--P. 18. "If God has made *sincere obedience* [I retort *faith unfeigned*] the **CONDITION** [or term] of salvation, he would certainly have drawn the line, and marked out the boundary precisely, because our life depended on it."

Page

* Mr. B. invites me thus to retort his bad arguments against *sincere obedience* p. 94. l. 18. I have been praying fifteen years for faith with some earnestness, and am not yet possess of more than half a grain.—Jesus assures you that a single grain, &c. would REMOVE A MOUNTAIN load of guilt from the conscience, &c.

—Page 28 “*Sincere obedience*” [I continue to say, faith unfeigned] “*is called a condition,*” [or a term] and no one knows what it is, &c. *O fine condition! Surely Satan was the author of it.*—

P. 24. *It is Satan’s catch-word for the gospel,—P. 38. It is “nothing but a jack-o’-lanthorn, dancing here and there and every where,” &c. For, p. 29. “If God has drawn no boundary, man must draw it, and, will draw it where he pleaseth.” “Sincere obedience” [I still retort sincere repentance, or true faith] “thus becomes a nose of wax, and is so fingered as to fit exactly every human face. I look upon this doctrine, as the devil’s master-piece, &c.”*

And I look upon these assertions, as the master-piece of antinomian rashness, and geneva-logic in the mouth of the pious vicar of Everton. Is it not surprizing, that he, who unmasks the christian world should be so hood-winked by Calvinism, as not to see that there are as many *false* professors of *SINCERE* repentance and *TRUE* faith, as there are of *sincere obedience*; that even the Turks call themselves mussulmen, or *true believers*; and that he has full as much reason to call sincere repentance, or true faith, a rotten buttress, a nose of wax, a paper kite, a jack-o’-lanthorn, &c. as *sincere obedience*?

What a touch has this learned divine given here to the ark of God, in order to prop up that of Calvin? and how happy is it for religion, that this grand argument against obedience, repentance, and faith, is founded upon an hypothetical proposition, p. 29. l. 18, “*If God has drawn no boundary?*” This supposition Mr. B. takes for granted, though it is evidently false; the boundaries of *sincere obedience* being full as clearly drawn in the scriptures as those of *true repentance*, and *faith unfeigned*.

§ God himself without “*a magic wand*” has drawn “*the line,*” both in every man’s conscience and in his written word. The line of *Jewish* obedience is drawn all over the old testament,

especially Ex. xx. Ps. xviii. and Mic. vi. 8. The line of *Christian* obedience is exactly drawn all over the new testament, and most particularly in our Lord's sermon upon the mount : and the line of *heathen* faith and obedience is, without the scripture, drawn in every breast, by the gracious light that enlightens every man who comes into the world. Through this light even mahometans and heathens may BELIEVE that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him ; and by this FAITH they may work righteousness, do to others as they would be done by, and so fulfil the law of liberty according to their dispensation : and that some do, is evident from those words of the apostle : *when the Gentiles, who have not the [written] law, do by nature [in its present state of initial restoration, without any other assistance than that which divine grace vouchsafes to all men universally] the things contained in the law ; these having no (written) law, are a law unto themselves, and shew the work (or precepts) of the law written in their hearts : their conscience also bearing witness and their thoughts, accusing or excusing one another.* Rom. ii. 14, 15. Therefore, the dreadful blow, inadvertently struck at all religion the side of *sincere* obedience, is happily given with a broken reed : christianity stands : the important term of sincere obedience, with respect to adult persons, has not Satan, but the blessed God, for its author ; and antinomianism is more and more "unmasked."

But these are not all Mr. Berridge's objections against obedience ; For p. 30. he says, "*If works are a condition in the gospel covenant, then works must make the whole of it.*" Why so ? May not faith and repentance, so long as they continue true and lively, produce good works, their proper fruit ? Why must the fruit "*make the whole*" of the tree ? Besides, works being the *evidencing cause* of our salvation, according to the gospel, you have no warrant from

from Scripture to say, they *must make the whole cause of it*. They agree extremely well with *faith, the instrumental cause*; with *Christ's blood, the properly meritorious cause*; and with *God's mercy, the first moving cause*. May I not affirm, that the motion of the fourth wheel of a clock, is absolutely necessary to its pointing the hour, without supposing that such a wheel *must make the whole of the wheel-work*? O how have the lean kine ascending out of the lake of Geneva, eaten those that fed so long near the river Cam?

But you add, P. 30. *Sincere obedience as a condition, will lead you unavoidably to perfect obedience*. And suppose it should, pray, where would be the misfortune? Is it right to frighten the Christian-world from *sincere obedience*, by holding out to their view Christian Perfection, as if it were Medusa's fearful head? Are we not commanded to *go on to perfection*? Was not this one of our Lord's complaints against the Church of Sardis? *I have not found thy works perfect before God*? Does not St. Paul sum up all the law, or all obedience in *love*? And does not St. John make honourable mention of *perfect love*, and excite those who are *not made perfect in love, to have fellowship with him*? and with those who could say, *Our love is made perfect*, 1 John iv. 17? Why then should the world be driven from *sincere*, by the fear of *perfect obedience*? Especially as our Lord never required *absolute perfection* from archangels, much less from fallen man: the perfection which he kindly calls us to, being nothing but a faithful improvement of our talents, according to the proportion of the grace given us, and the standard of the dispensation we are under. So that upon this footing, he whose one talent gains another, obeys as perfectly in his degree, as he whose five talents gain five more. Notwithstanding all the insinuations of those *fishers of men*, who beat the streams of truth, to drive the fishes from Christian Perfection into the

Antinomian net. God is not an austere master, much less a foolish one, he does not expect to reap where he has not sown: or to reap wheat where he sows only barley. Those gracious words of our Lord, repeated four times in the gospel, might alone silence them that discourage believers from going on to the perfection of obedience peculiar to their dispensation, *To every one that hath to purpose, shall be given, and he shall have abundance*, he shall attain the perfection of his dispensation; *but from him that hath not*, because he buries his talent, under pretence that his Lord requires unattainable obedience, *shall be taken away even that which he hath*. Compare Matt. xiii. 12. with Matt. xxv. 29, Mark iv. 24, and Luke viii. 18.

The two last arguments of Mr. Berridge against sincere obedience may be retorted thus. (1) *If faith is a condition [or term] in the gospel covenant, then it [faith] must make the whole of it.* But if this is true, what becomes of Christ's obedience unto death? You reply, Faith necessarily supposes it. But you cannot escape: I follow you step by step, and say, The works I plead for, necessarily suppose not only our Lord's obedience unto death, but *faith* which you call "the only term of all salvation." (2) You say, *sincere obedience as a condition will lead you unavoidably up to perfect obedience.* And I retort: *faith unfeigned, as a term or condition, will lead you unavoidably up to perfect faith*: for if the law of liberty commands us to love God *with all our soul*, it charges us also to believe in Christ *with all our heart*. Acts viii. 37. Should you reply, I am not afraid of being *led up to perfect faith*, I return the same answer with regard to *perfect obedience*.

This argument against *sincere* obedience, taken from the danger of going on to the *perfection* of it, is so much the more extraordinary, when dropping from Mr. Berridge's pen, as it is demolished by the words of his mouth, when he sings,

"Thee

“ Thee we would be always blessing,
 Serve thee as thy hosts above,
 Pray and praise thee without ceasing,
 Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation;
 Pure and spotless may we be!
 Triumph in thy full salvation,
 Perfectly restor'd by thee!”

See a *Collection of divine songs* by J. Berridge, M. A.
 &c. p. 178.

To conclude: Another argument is often urged by this pious author to render the doctrine, of a believer's *final* justification by the evidence of works odious to humble souls. He takes it for granted that it encourages *boasting*; still confounding the *works of faith*, which he at times recommends as well as I, with the pharisaical *works of unbelief*, which I perpetually decry as well as he. But even this argument, about which the Calvinists make so much noise, may be retorted thus: there is as much danger of being proud of one's *faith*, as of one's *works of faith*; and if Mr. B. presses me with Rom. iii. 27. *Boasting is excluded by the law of faith*; I reply, that, the works I plead for being the *works OF FAITH*, his argument makes as much for me as for him; and I press him in my turn with Rom. xi. 18, 20, *Boast not thyself against the branches. Thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear.* Which shews, it is as possible, to be proud of *faith*, as of the *works of faith*. Nor can a believer boast of the latter, unless his humble faith begins to degenerate into vain fancy.

Such are the capital objections, that Mr. B. in his unguarded zeal for the first gospel axiom, has advanced against the second. Should he attempt to exculpate himself by saying, that all his argu-

ments against *sincere obedience* are levelled at the *hypocritical obedience* which pharisaic boasters sometimes call *sincere*: I reply, (1) It is pity he never *once* told his readers so. (2) It is surprizing that he who *unmasks the Christian world*, should so mask himself, as to say just the reverse of what he means. (3) If he really designs to attack *insincere obedience*, why does he not attack it *as insincere*? And why does he advance no arguments against it, but such as would give the deepest wound to *truly sincere obedience* if they were conclusive? (4) What would Mr. B. say of me, if I published an impious essay against *divine worship* in general, and to vindicate my conduct gave it out some months after, that I only meant to attack "*the worship of the host*" which makes a part of what the *papists* call "*divine worship*?" Would so lame an excuse clear me before the unprejudiced world? But, (5) the worst is, that if Calvinism is true, all Mr. B's. arguments are as conclusive against evangelical, sincere obedience, as against the hypocritical works of pharisees: for if Christians (who have time to add the *works* chiefly recommended by St. James, to the *faith* chiefly preached by St. Paul) have a *full, inamissible* title to *final* justification without those works, nay with the most horrid works, such as adultery and murder; is it not evident that the passport of good works and *sincere obedience*, is as needless to their eternal salvation, as a rotten buttress, a paper-kite, or a jack-o'-lanthorn?

FOURTH SECTION.

When Mr. B. grants, that "our Damnation is wholly from ourselves," he grants that our salvation is suspended upon some term, which through grace we have power to fulfil: and in this case, unconditional reprobation, absolute election, and finished salvation, are false doctrines: and Calvin's whole system stands upon a sandy foundation.

WHEN a man grants me *two and two*, he grants me *four*; he cannot help it. If he exclaims against me for drawing the necessary inference, he only exposes himself before men of sense.—Mr. B. p. 190. fully grants the second gospel axiom: "*Our damnation*, says he, *is wholly from ourselves*: nevertheless he declares, p. 26, that there is "*an absolute impossibility of being justified (or saved) in any manner by our works*;" and part of his book seems levelled at this proposition of the minutes, "Salvation not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition." Now, if I am not mistaken, by granting the above-mentioned gospel axiom, as moderate Calvinists do, he grants me Mr. W's. proposition, together with the demolition of Calvinism: for

(1) If *my damnation is wholly from myself**, it is not the necessary consequence of an *absolute efficacious* decree of non-election, for then my damnation

* By the word *wholly*, Mr. B. cannot mean that our damnation may not have *secondary* causes, such as a tempting devil, an alluring world, wicked company, a bad book, &c. He is too wise to deny it. All I suppose he means, as well as myself, is that every reprobate

nation would be *wholly from God*. Nor is it the *necessary* consequence of the devil's temptation, for then it would be *from the devil*: nor is it (upon the gospel plan) the *necessary* consequence of Adam's fall; because, although I fell *seminally* into a state of damnation in the loins of Adam, yet *the free gift came* *seminally* upon me, as well as *upon all men, unto initial justification*; for I was no less in Adam, when God raised him up by the true promise of a Mediator, than when he fell by the lying promise of the tempter.

Now if my damnation is neither from any unconditional decree of reprobation, nor from the fall of Adam, what becomes of Apollyon and his sister, the great Diana? What becomes of *absolute* reprobation, and its inseparable companion, *unconditional* election? What becomes of all the horrors that St. Paul is supposed to father upon the God of love, Rom. ix. In a word, What becomes of Calvinism?

Again, If "*my damnation is wholly from myself*," the just Judge of all the earth must damn me personally for something, which he had put it in my power personally to do or to leave undone. My damnation then, and consequently my salvation, is necessarily suspended on some term or condition, the performance or non-performance of which, is at my option. Nor is light more contrary to darkness than these two propositions of Mr. B. are to each other, "*Our damnation is wholly from ourselves*:" And, "*St. Paul plainly shuts out all works of sincere obedience, as a CONDITION*" of eternal salvation. On the first, stand the minutes and the checks; on the second, calvinism and antinomianism. And as some of Mr. B's. readers cannot receive two incompatible propositions, they
desire

bate is the *primary* meritorious cause of his damnation. Just as divine grace in Christ is the primary, meritorious cause of our salvation; although under that original, principal, leading cause, there are inferior, instrumental, evidencing causes, such as Bibles, Ministers, religious conversation, faith, good works, &c.

desire to know which of them we must give to the winds, with the paper-kite of sincere obedience?

I hope that gentleman will not endeavour to screen calvinism by saying, that the reprobates are damned merely for their personal sins, and therefore *their damnation is wholly from themselves*. An illustration will show the fallacy of this argument, by which calvinism is frequently kept in countenance.

A Monarch, in whose dominions all children are *naturally* born lame, makes a law that all who shall not *walk strait* before a certain day, shall be cast into a fiery furnace. The terrible day comes, and myriads of lame culprits stand before him. His anger smokes against them, and with a stretched out arm he thunders, Depart from me, ye cursed, into that place of torment prepared for obstinate offenders: for when I bid you walk upright, ye persisted to go lame. Go burn to all eternity, and as ye burn, clear my justice: and remember, that *your misery is WHOLLY from YOURSELVES*.

WHOLLY from OURSELVES! they reply with one voice: was it ever in *our* power not to be born lame: or to walk upright in our crippled condition? Wast not thou acquainted with our *natural* misfortune? When a wonderful man came into thy kingdom, to heal the lame, didst thou not order that he should pass us by? If he and his servants have tantalized us with general offers of a free cure, dost thou not know, they were complimentary, lying offers? Hast thou forgotten, how thou orderest the loving Physician who wept over us, never to prepare one drop of his purple tincture for us? And how thy "*secret will*" bound us with the invisible chains of an *efficacious* decree of preterition, that we might never come at that precious remedy? In a word, was it not from the beginning thy fixt determination, that as we are born lame and helpless subjects to thy crown: so we should remain the lame and remediless victim of thy wrath? If therefore thou wilt
show

show the boundless extent of thy grim sovereignty, by casting us into the flaming abyss, do it ; for we cannot resist thee ; but do not pretend that we have pulled down thy wrath upon us. Rob, O rob us not of the only alleviation, that our deplorable case can admit of, viz. the comfort of thinking that our destruction is *not* from ourselves. If thou wilt be fierce as a lion, at least be not hypocritical as a crocodile.

Hear ye heavens, replies the absolute monarch, give ear O earth, and judge of the justice of my proceedings against these lame culprits. In consequence of a permissive, *efficacious* decree of mine, five or six thousand years ago, one of their ancestors brought lameness upon himself and upon them ; therefore their necessary lameness and the fearful destruction with which I am going to punish their lame steps, are *wholly from themselves*. Are not my ways equal, and theirs unequal ? And far from being a crocodile towards them, am I not a lamb in whose mouth is no guile ? Or at least a lion, who like that of the tribe of Judah, use my sovereign power only according to the clearest dictates of justice and equity ?—Out of thine own mouth, reply the wretched culprits, the world of rational beings will condemn thee, thou true king of terrors ! Thou acknowledgest that thousands of years before we were born one of our ancestors brought upon us the necessary lameness, in consequence of which we must be cast into that fiery furnace, without having ever had it in our power to take one strait step ; and yet thou sayest that our destruction is *wholly from ourselves* ! If thou wert not lost to all sense of equity and regard for truth, thou wouldst say, that our condemnation is not from ourselves but *wholly from a man whom most of us never heard of* : unless thou wast the grand contriver of the fall, which brought on his lameness and ours : and in that case our destruction is far less from him than from *thyself*. Besides, thou hast published a decree, in which thou declarest, *They shall say no more, The fathers*

fathers have eaten a four grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge : but every one shall die for his OWN INIQUITY. Behold all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine, The soul that sinneth it shall die the death thou designest us. Now iniquity that we could never personally help, an iniquity caused by one of our ancestors, can never be our own iniquity contradistinguished from that of our fathers. If thou didst cast all the asses of thy kingdom into thy fiery furnace, because they do not bray as melodiously as the Nightingale sings : or all the Ravens, because they are not white as Swans ; couldst thou with any truth say, Their torments are wholly from themselves ? And hast thou any more reason to say that our perdition is from ourselves, when thou burnest merely for our natural, necessary lameness, and for the lame steps that it has naturally and necessarily occasioned ?

The judicious reader will enter into this illustration without being presented with a key of my own making ; and trusting his candor and good sense with that business, I draw the following inferences from the second gospel-axiom which Mr. B. has explicitly granted, (1) God does not prevaricate, but speaks a melancholy truth when he says, *O Israel THOU hast destroyed THYSELF.* (2) Every reprobate is *his own* destroyer, not only because he has wilfully sinned away the justification mentioned Rom. v. 18. by which all infants are entitled to the kingdom of heaven ; but also because he wilfully rejects the salvation really prepared for, and *sincerely* offered to him in Christ. (3) According to the second covenant we are never in a state of *personal* damnation, till we have personally buried the talent of that *grace which bringeth salvation, and hath appeared to all men.* (4) Calvinism which teaches the reprobates fully to exculpate themselves, and justly to charge God with shuffling, lying, injustice, cruelty, and hypocrisy,
is

is a system that does the reprobates infinite honour, and the divine perfections unspeakable injury. And (5) When Mr. B. maintains, that "*our damnation is wholly from ourselves*," he maintains indirectly, that the Minutes and Checks, which necessarily stand or fall with that gospel axiom, are truly Scriptural. Thus, like other pious Calvinists,* he

* The warm author of a Pamphlet entitled "*Dr. Crisp's ghost, or a Check upon Checks: being a bridle for Antinomians, and a whip for Pelagian and Arminian Methodists*," with this motto, *Without are dogs, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie*; designed, it seems, to whip the Arminian dogs, and to prove that Flavel, Baxter, Williams, and I, *make a lie*, when we represent Dr. Crisp as an abettor of "*Antinomian dotages*."—This warm author, I say informs us that even Dr. Crisp, overcome by the glaring evidence of truth, once said: "I must read the fearful doom of all, who have not learned this lesson [*denying ungodliness*] and are not yet taught it of God, &c. They are yet in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, and have not their part in this matter. I say, as yet, this is their fearful doom, and if they continue thus untaught their lesson, there can be no salvation by grace for them. Not every one that says, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, &c. Some licentious ungodly wretches, I know, reply, though to their own ruin, &c. that Christ justifies the ungodly, and we are saved by faith without works: but alas! they observe not how cunningly the devil equivocates to lull them asleep in their ungodly practices. It is true indeed that Christ justifies the ungodly, that is, he finds them ungodly when he imputes his righteousness to them; but he does not leave them ungodly after he has inspired them, he teacheth them to deny ungodliness: he affords no cloak to perseverance in ungodliness, but will come in flaming fire, with his mighty angels to render vengeance unto such. He that denies not ungodliness him will Christ deny before his Father which is in heaven. Why then wilt thou be deluded with **CROSS SOPHISTRY**, in so clear a **SUNSHINE** of the gospel? Is not the light so bright that thine own heart checks thee? And if thine heart condemns thee, God is greater, and searches all things."

§ Hail! Crisp. Far from *checking my checks*, and *whipping the Arminian dog*, in an happy moment thou manfully fightest St. James's battle; thou callest the doctrine of the checks "*sunshine*:" and WHIPPEST thine own speculative error out of the church as "*gross sophistry*."

he gives us an excellent dose of antidote to expel
 D Antinomian

Dr. Crisp [as quoted by this opponent] almost discovered once the important difference between the salvation of a *sinner*, previous to works; and the salvation of a *believer*, consequent upon works.

His excellent words run thus. "It is true also, we are saved by faith without works, but here also Satan equivocates as grossly as in the other case; for though faith only saves without works efficiently, YET NOT CONSEQUENTIALLY, as I said before: that is, though faith only saves, yet that faith must not be alone that saves, but must be attended with its fruits, to wit, denying ungodliness: else it is so far from saving, that it is but a dead faith, and he is but a vain man that has no better, as St. James well affirms. The person believing must deny ungodliness, though, this denial works not his salvation."—[This is very true, if it is understood either of *initial* salvation, or of the *primary cause* of eternal salvation] "Our Saviour speaks to the same purpose, A good tree bringeth forth good fruit: he does not say the fruit makes it a good tree, yet the good fruit is inseparable. I speak not of quantities or degrees, &c. but of the truth, to wit a *real and sincere denial of ungodliness*:"—Excellent! To whip the dogs the Rev. Mr. P——l, needs only prove, that when David robbed Uriah of the ewe-lamb that lay in his bosom, tried to kill his soul with drunkenness, and treacherously killed his body with the sword of the Ammonites, he "*really and sincerely denied ungodliness*." And that his faith produced the *good fruit*, which is INSEPARABLE from saving faith. The moment this is done, I promise the public to clear pious Calvinists in general from the charge of *speculative Antinomianism*. Dr. Crisp in particular from that of *glaring contradiction* and his zealous second, who accuses me with "*gross falsities*," from Calvinistic rashness.

We can no more exculpate warm Calvinists, when they betray holiness into the hands of practical Antinomians, because they now and then speak honourably of good works: than we can clear Pontius Pilate, from the guilt of delivering the Messiah to the Jews; because he once solemnly took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, *I find no fault in this just person: I am innocent of his blood: see ye to it*. If the Reverend author of the *Whip for the Arminians* considers this, or if he turns to IV. Check. p. 40, where I produce D. Williams's observation concerning Dr. Crisp's *inconsistency*, he will probably be less forward in checking Checks, that he has not candidly considered: and in making whips for the back of his honest neighbours, lest some of them should take them from him to lash his mistakes and chastise his precipitation.

Antinomian poison. But who shall recommend it to the Calvinistic world? Mr. *Wesley* they will not hear: my Checks they will not read. Go then, "*valiant Sergeant, IF.*" Thou comest from *Everton*, therefore thou shalt be welcome. Thou knowest the way to the closets of Solifidians; nay thou art there already with "*The Christian world unmasked.*"

FIFTH SECTION.

Mr. B. candidly grants the conditionality of perseverance, and consequently of election, by showing much respect to "Sergeant IF," who "guards the camp of Jesus:" But soon picking a quarrel with the valiant Sergeant, he discharges him as a Jew, opens the camp to the Antinomians by opposing to them only a sham centinel, and shows the foundation of Calvinism in a most striking light.

THE pious author of '*The Christian World unmasked*' speaking of the Calvinistic doctrine of unconditional perseverance, which he confounds with the evangelical doctrine of conditional perseverance, p. 194. says with great truth, provided he had spoken of the latter; it "affords a stable prop to upright minds, yet lends no wanton cloak to corrupt hearts. It brings a cordial to revive the faint, and keeps a guard to check the forward. The guard attending on this doctrine, is Sergeant *IF*: low in stature, but lofty in significance; a very valiant guard, though a monosyllable. Kind notice has been taken of the Sergeant by Jesus Christ and his

his Apostles; and much respect is due unto him from the Lord's recruiting officers, and every soldier in his army. Pray listen to the Sergeant's speech: *IF ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed*, John viii. 31. *IF ye do these things ye shall never fall*, 2 Peter i. 10. *IF what ye have heard shall abide in you, ye shall continue in the Son and in the Father*, 1 John ii. 24. *We are made partakers of Christ, IF we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end*, Heb. iii. 14. *Whofo looketh and continueth (that is, IF he that looketh, doth continue) in the perfect law of liberty, that man shall be blessed in his deed*, James i. 25." —And again, p. 194. "IF backsliders fancy, they must all be restored by repentance, because David was restored, and Peter was; they might as well suppose, they must all be translated into heaven without dying,* because Enoch and Elijah were." p. 199, l. 17th.

§ Upon this plan of doctrine, we are ready to lay by our controversial pens, and shake hands with our Calvinist brethren. All that we desire of them; in order to a lasting agreement, is—(1) To consider what is implied in the preceding concessions: and to gag Sergeant IF, when he honestly speaks the very words of the captain of our salvation, or those of the Apostles his Lieutenant-generals:—(2) Not to call him a *Galatian*, or a *Papist*, when he is found in company with St. James.—(3) Not to enter an action against him, for disturbing the peace of those backsliders, who having denied the faith, and

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lost

* Here Mr. B. in a fit of legality far exceeds the limits of the truth, which I maintain in the Checks: for he insinuates, that the recovery of backsliders is as improbable as their bodily translation into heaven. For my part, severe as I am represented to backsliders, I believe their return is ten thousand times more probable, than their going to heaven as Enoch and Elijah did.

lost their first love, now quietly hug a bosom-sin, or take their Laodicean rest on the pillow of self-election:—(4) Not to put him under arrest, for heading a platoon of those whom some of the absolute elect call *diabolonians*, because they doubt the truth of *unconditional* election, or election without *IF*; and chuse to fire at *sin*, rather than at their *captain*.—And (5) not to say to him, Hail Sergeant, kissing him as if he were a good Christian, in order to betray him with some decency into the hands of the Antinomians, as a “circumcised caitiff.”

Whether my pious opponent has not treated the honest Sergeant in that manner, I leave the candid reader to determine. “Yet take notice,” [says he, p. 194, “that Sergeant *IF*, is not of Jewish but Christian parentage; not sprung from Levi, though a son of Abraham; no centinel of Moses, but a watchman for the camp of Jesus. He wears no dripping beard, like the circumcised race; and is no legal blustering *condition* to purchase man’s salvation, but a modest gospel *evidence* to prove the truth of grace. He tells no idle tales”—Enough, Rev. Sir, if “*he tells no idle tales*,” he does not cavil and quibble, much less does he deny his proper name, and well known meaning. Although he no more dreams of “*purchasing man’s salvation*” than you do, yet he is conditional *If*, Sergeant *If*, a very valiant guard to the Scriptural doctrine of perseverance, and an irreconcilable enemy to Calvin’s election, and “Antinomian dotages.”

O ye opposers of the second gospel axiom, “*Pray come and peep!*”—See Calvinism “*unmasked*” by one of your principal leaders, who shews to the world the futile foundation of your doctrines of grace!—Thanks be to his humourous honesty, we see now that those famous doctrines stand upon the supermetaphysical difference there is, between *If*, and *If*, between Jewish *If*, and Christian

Christian *If*; legal *If*, and evangelical *If*; *If*, at Madely, and *If*, at Everton. When *IF*, the culprit, appears in the Foundery-pulpit, *he tells idle tales*, it seems! he sily disguises himself! But when *If*, the orthodox, shews himself in the desk at ***, (for it is to be feared, that he seldom appears in the pulpit *valiantly to guard Bible perseverance*) he never equivocates! When he says to people that never stood, or to people that can never fall, *IF ye do these things ye shall never fall*, &c. He is not a condition, and yet he never shuffles! These are strange hints indeed!

Patient Reader, permit me to try, by the following questions, the solidity of the Calvinistic distinction between *IF* and *IF*, which supports the amazing weight of the great Diana. (1) When the gospel said to David, *IF thou dost these things thou shalt never fall*, and he fell into adultery: was sergeant *IF*, "a MODEST gospel evidence to prove the truth of his grace?" And supposing he was such a modest evidence, did he "lend no wanton cloak to a corrupt heart?"—(2) When our Lord said to the young ruler, *IF thou wilt be perfect, sell all*; was sergeant *IF* of Jewish, or Christian parentage?—(3) How shall I know when the sergeant's "a centinel of Moses," or when he is a "watchman for the camp of Jesus?" Should you answer, A Jewish *IF* wears a dripping beard, you may indeed by such an argument convince, and entertain some Calvinists; but you leave me quite in the dark: and with "some very honest folks, who are cast in a gospel foundery, instead of "ringing a fire-bell," I smile at your wit and orthodoxy, but can no more understand what you mean by an *IF* "with a dripping beard" than you could conceive what I would be at if I spoke of a yes, with a long tail, or a perhaps with dreadful horns.—(4) How shall I distinguish a "legal" form an evangelical *If*? Should you say, that the "legal, blustering" sergeant wears an halberd, but the evangelical mild *If* has no weapon at all; I ask,

ask, What business has an unarmed IF in "the camp of Jesus?" Why do you call him "a sergeant?" Is he not a sham "centinel" a ridiculous scare-crow, to deceive the simple, rather than "*a very valiant guard to check the forward?*"——(5) How shall I make a difference between an Everton *If*, and a Madely *If*? When I have read my Bible in both places, I have always found the sergeant exactly of the same stature; he always appeared in the same black regimentals; and to this day a Madely *If*, exactly answers to the description, that the pious Vicar of *Everton* gives of him. He is "*a monosyllable, low in stature, but of lofty significance;*" whereas the *Everton If*, is yet *lower in significance than in stature*, since you make it signify just nothing. Should you reply, that a *Madely If*, is "*like one of the circumcised race;*" I answer, that although, eleven years ago, I *circumcised* him with an Antinomian knife, yet I did not quite mutilate him. But I could name a gospel minister, who has "*served more than three apprenticeships at a noted hall of physic,*" by whom the unhappy sergeant has not only been "*circumcised,*" but quite emasculated, yea deprived of his very vitals. For when *If*, in the above quoted Scriptures, is absolutely divested of *conditionality* and turned into an unnecessary *evidence of grace*, which the elect can do without, as well as David and Solomon; may it not be compared to a dead Sergeant, whose lungs and heart are pulled out; and whose ill-smelling remains, far from being a "*valiant guard*" against the forward, prove an enticing lure to unclean birds who fly about in search of a carcase.

Excuse, reader, this prolix and ludicrous defence of the sergeant. The subject, though treated in so queer a manner, is of the utmost importance: for the Minutes, the Checks, and the second gospel axiom stand

stand or fall with sergeant *If*. If he is a coward, a knave, or a cypher, antinomianism will still prevail: but if he recovers his true and *lofty significance*, he will soon rid the church of antinomian dotages. As "much respect is due unto him," and to St. James's undefiled religion, which the ingenious book I quote indirectly undermines, I thought it my duty to "open my bag" also, and let out a ferret, or to speak exactly the language of Everton, "a fox" to chase "*a straggling goose hard at hand*." Take notice however that by the "*goose*," I do not mean the truly reverend author of *the world unmasked*, for he has wit enough, and to spare: but "*the waddling dame*," calvinistic contradiction, alias *Logica Genevensis*. And now reader, I lay her before thee, not to make thee "*sup* upon her "*amidst a deal of cackling music*," but that thou wouldst help me to nail her up to the everlasting doors of the temple of truth, as sportsmen do cranes and foxes to the doors of their rural buildings.

CONCLUSION.

Were I to conclude these strictures upon the dangerous tenets, inadvertently advanced, and happily contradicted, in, *The Christian world unmasked*, without professing my brotherly love and sincere respect for the ingenious and pious Author: I should wrong him, myself, and the cause which I defend. I only do him justice when I say, that few, very few of our elders, equal him in devotedness to Christ, zeal, diligence, and ministerial success. His indefatigable labours in the word and doctrine, entitle him to a double share of honour: and I invite all my readers to *esteem him with me highly in love for his Master's, and his work's sake*: intreating them not to undervalue his

his vital piety on account of his Antinomian opinions; and beseeching them to consider, that his errors, are so much the more excusable, as they do not influence his moral conduct, and he refutes them himself far more than his favourite scheme of doctrine allows him to do. Add to this, that those very errors spring in a great degree from the idea, that he honours Christ by receiving, and does God service by propagating them.

§ The desire of catching the attention of his readers, has made him chuse a witty, facetious manner of writing, for which he has a peculiar turn; and the necessity I am under of standing his *indirect* attack obliges me to meet him upon his own ground, and to encounter him with his own weapons. I beg, that what passes for evangelical humour in him, may not be called indecent levity in me. A sharp pen may be guided by a kind heart; and such, I am persuaded, is that of my much esteemed antagonist, whom I publicly invite to my pulpit: protesting that I should be edified, and overjoyed, to hear him enforce there the *guarded* substance of his book, which, notwithstanding the vein of solifidianism I have taken the liberty to open, contains many great and glorious truths.

End of the Second Part.

